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The American School. A Study of Secondary Education. By WALTER SWAIN HINCHMAN. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1916. Pp. ii+232.

Mr. Hinchman has devoted the larger portion of his book to the American high school. As he himself says in his introduction, he has attempted to treat a very broad subject in a very limited space. But in his discussion of secondary education in America, he has wisely selected six important phases of that work, and has confined himself to these. Throughout this discussion runs his theme, a most vital and interesting point of view; namely, education by production. This idea is the keynote of the chapter on "Education," and here the theme is outlined. One learns by doing; one learns to think by thinking, and to make things by making them. Doubtless the results during the process will be of no value to the world, but of inestimable account in the development of a human being. The next three chapters might be called a general survey of American schools, including statistics and classifications of courses of study, with a sorting and labeling of teachers—not an inspiring discussion, but possibly a useful background for the succeeding chapters.

Following the picture of schools as they are, comes a discussion of American traits, upon which is based the plan of these schools of tomorrow. In the constructive ideas for the schools are a number of interesting points. One pregnant suggestion is that the course of study shall contain "leads" that shall influence the time spent out of school hours. A practical suggestion is the six-year high school—this course to be divided into the junior and senior schools, each of three years. The curriculum for this school should be planned with the following aims in view: humanism, information, hand training, "leads" toward the pupil's leisure time and his maturity, and above all preparation for life. Interesting courses of study are worked out on this basis. The methods of teaching must be worked out on the same principles, constantly keeping in view the idea of education by production. The chapter on "Athletics" contains nothing particularly new; in brief, it suggests that with "proper supervision, adequate equipment, and the treatment of physical development as a part of the whole education" the pupils may gain both morally and physically.

The last chapter offers a number of ideas for the development of morality and religion. Whether or not they are practical might be proved with the trying out.

On the whole the book contains clear-cut, definite reading. Perhaps the three most suggestive ideas are the responsibility of parents for the schools, and the necessity of "leads" in the school to influence the pupil's outside and later life, and the main theme, "education by production."

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